

Senate Transportation Committee-PSO Eric Zapata

Good Afternoon I am Jeff Hadley, the Public Safety Chief for the City of Kalamazoo and on behalf of the nearly 300 employees of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety I want to thank Senator Tanya Schiutmaker and her fellow colleagues for presenting this matter before the Senate Transportation Committee today in consideration to name portion of I-94 in Kalamazoo County; as the "Officer Eric Zapata Memorial Highway".

On April 18, 2011 PSO Eric E. Zapata of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety was tragically killed in the line of duty responding to assist another Officer who was engaged in a gun battle with a dangerous individual. PSO Zapata was the first officer killed in the line of duty in Kalamazoo County since the 1850's. His memory and persona lives on everyday within the walls of Public Safety and serves as a constant reminder to our employees of the dangers and perils of our profession.

I couldn't think of a better way to honor not only Officer Zapata, his family, his children, and our Officers but all the Public Safety personnel who put their lives on the line on a daily basis.

I know that Connie, Alfonso, Irene, Alexis, Eric Anthony, Jacob and the many friends that Eric had miss him dearly and this recognition of his life and sacrifice will allow his spirit and life to live on in the most positive way.

Thank You So Very Much For Your Consideration!